

PEGGIE BLIZARD

## Intimate bouquets



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For the better part of the past 10 years, Peggie Blizard has focused her paintings on the same theme: cut garden- and wildflowers in Mason jars. Her fascination with the subject matter is as much about the jars as it is the flowers.

She explains, "One of the questions I get repeatedly is, 'How do you paint water?' The answer, of course, is that you don't paint water; you paint the reflection of objects in water. The raised letters on the jars catch bits of color and help to convey the illusion of reality. By using flowers, the slight distortion of the stems in the water helps to create the Trompe l'Oeil effect."

Blizard also wants to portray intimacy and create the illusion of space in the paintings. The works should draw in the viewer and, because of the fine detail work in the flowers and the jar, they should not stop looking. Often, the flowers depicted come from Blizard's garden or they are from nurseries, which highlights the knowledge she has of their forms.

Through August 16, Blizard will exhibit new paintings in the series at George Billis Gallery in New York City.

Included in the show is *Nectarine Blossoms*, which is based on one of the first pieces she created in the grouping but depicts nectarine blossoms instead of apple blossoms. Having turned up empty handed when wanting to paint a second version of the first painting, Blizard when to a local nursery and found the small subjects for this work.

"When I put the blossoms in the jar, I was intrigued by the way the wooden stems were ridged and did not bend gracefully as flowers on thinner stems usually do," she describes. "But then I noticed they cast a delicately patterned shadow on the wall to the right of the still life and I took up the challenge."

The paintings *Mixed Flowers II* and *Petunias and Cosmos in a Jar* were inspired by flowers growing in her garden. Blizard says, "I picked a bunch in both cases and tried a variety of arrangements until I hit on something to which I responded. The petunias are fun to paint because

1  
*Mixed Flowers II*,  
oil on panel,  
30 x 24"

2  
*Ranunculus and  
a Ball Jar*, oil on  
panel, 30 x 24"

3  
*Nectarine  
Blossoms*, oil on  
panel, 30 x 24"



3

they are fluid and soft and very much like fabric. They remind me of dresses I've worn to dances."

Another work is *Ranunculus and a Ball Jar*. "Ranunculus are one of my favorite flowers, but it only shows up around Easter

time in our area. I bought a number of the plants and put them in the ground. One was the most beautiful soft pink with a brownish tint; but because I am working with flowers from my garden, the seasons dictate what I can paint during different

seasons," she says. "Although this picture is darker than I usually work, this painting is meant to be fun. I focused on painting the composition both inside and outside of the jar, in order to emphasize the illusion of the space and atmosphere." ●